

The CommUUnicator

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Waynesboro

These are My People

By Karen G. Johnston

I have heard that the Buddhist teacher Sharon Salzberg has a spiritual practice when she flies. Waiting to board at the airport gate, she looks at the people sitting there and says to herself, *These are my people.*

A random, possibly ragtag, set of strangers are her people? Seriously? Yes, seriously.

I have begun doing this. At the gate. On board. For the next few hours, *these are my people.* With weather delays, even longer.

And I have begun doing it elsewhere. When riding the train. Attending a concert. In the grocery store. I even did it in January, when I was one of hundreds of clergy who traveled to Minneapolis to march with 50,000+ for the future of our nation. Every so often, in that frigid cold, I would feel the crowd around me and think: *These people: they are mine and I am theirs.*

They weren't my besties nor my chosen family. Not even my immediate neighbors, but the ones that the universe cast as my temporary lot. Random. Not of my choosing.

Except I *choose* to choose them. As a spiritual practice, it stretches me. This embrace of others that I believe my faith asks of me (requires of me?) is not necessarily logical, as well as occasionally mystical and nearly always complicated.

Does this change anything? Bring about healing or justice? I'm not certain, but I can't

help wondering if this one way we get closer to Love at the Center.

Does this transform me? Hell, yes. It commits me to the very nature of reality: interdependence. It reminds me that I—*that we*—belong to each other, like it or not.

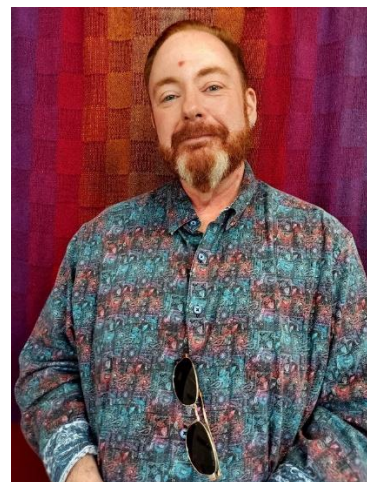
I'm thankful for the deep (so deep) and real (so real) and true (so true) ways in which we risk growing Beloved Community. In which we dare creating mutual aid networks beyond those besties. In which we risk creating and sustaining the necessary, complex, messy, sometimes prickly, sometimes joyful community coalitions to get us through this authoritarian nightmare.

These are my people.

You are my people.

This essay was published by the UUA on its [Braver Wiser](#) weekly inspiration in March.

New Member Spotlight



Stephen Van Siclen has a long history with Unitarian Universalism. As a child, he grew up in a UU congregation. A tumultuous family life brought him to our area as a teenager, where he lived in his father's

house but was essentially on his own. He attended UUFW where he got to know the Pattersons and their kids, along with other long-time members. During this time of life, Stephen had to work to provide for himself. Despite holding down a variety of after-school jobs, he graduated from Riverheads High School.

For most of his adult life, Stephen lived in Colorado, where he got married, had two kids and earned a degree from a tech school. He now has an impressive resume in information technology, having worked in software development, quality assurance engineering, systems administration, and site reliability engineering. He worked for IBM for 14 years and is currently working from home as a specialist in cyber security.

After divorce, Stephen met Amy online. They have been married for 24 years and together supported a blended family of five children, two from his first marriage, one from Amy’s first marriage and two together. Three of their children currently live with them. The youngest, Rosemary, is 18.

Stephen brought his family back to this area ten years ago. They had been members of a UU congregation in Colorado, but here Stephen felt he needed to do more searching for his spiritual home. After exploring Catholicism for a number of years, he has found his way back to Unitarian Universalism. Amy will consider joining him as a UUFW member in the near future.

Stephen’s family life keeps him busy, but in his spare time he studies philosophy, collects vinyl recordings and enjoys comic books and video games.

2026 Flower Service



Last Sunday, the UUFW celebrated its annual Flower Ceremony. It is a tradition in UU congregations, not always on Easter, but always with the shared spirit of celebrating life on planet earth, and especially rebirth and springtime.

Rev. Norbert Capek is credited with creating the ritual in 1923. He and his wife Maja Capek founded the Unitarian church in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Norbert Capek died in a Nazi concentration camp during World War II. You can learn more about the UU Flower Ceremony [here](#).

April Rain Song

Let the rain kiss you.
Let the rain beat upon your head with silver liquid drops.
Let the rain sing you a lullaby.
The rain makes still pools on the sidewalk.
The rain makes running pools in the gutter.
The rain plays a little sleep-song on our roof at night—
And I love the rain.

By Langston Hughes

